

Remarks/Arguments:

The pending claims are 37, 40, 41, 44, 47, 59, 66, 69, 70, 73, and 76. Claim 53 has been canceled. Claims 40, 41, 44, 47, 59, 69, 70, 73, and 76 have been amended. No matter is introduced therein.

Claims 37, 40, 44, 47, 59, 66, and 76 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Nakatani et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,096,411). Claims 66, 69, 70, 73 and 76 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Nakatani. The rejections are respectfully traversed.

The claims have been amended so that there remain only two independent claims: claims 37 and 66. Claims 40, 41, 44, 47 and 59 depend from claim 37. Claims 69, 70, 73, and 76 depend from claim 66.

Claim 37 recites, in part:

resin material impregnated into the fiber sheet, the resin material including at least one of thermoplastic resin and thermosetting resin having semi-cured portion; and

a resin layer formed smoothly on the fiber sheet, the resin layer being made of material identical to the resin material.

Claim 66 recites, in part:

resin material impregnated into the fiber sheet, the resin material including at least one of thermoplastic resin and thermosetting resin having semi-cured portion; and

a resin layer formed on the fiber sheet, being made of material identical to the resin material.

In paragraph 21 of the Office Action, the Section 103 rejection of claim 66 concedes that Nakatani is "silent in regards to having the additional layer material be same as the impregnating resin material." Even without such a concession, Nakatani itself does not disclose Applicants' claimed feature of a resin layer formed on the fiber sheet. That is, Nakatani does not disclose that the resin layer formed on the fiber sheet is "made of material identical to the resin material" as claimed by Applicants. Instead, Figure 3A of Nakatani discloses copper foils 4, 4 are deposited on both sides of the fiber sheets 10, 10. There is no disclosure in Nakatani

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that resin material can be substituted for the copper foils. The concession in the Office Action, standing alone, and the concession in combination with the actual teachings in Nakatani, mean that claim 37, and its dependent claims 40, 41, 44, 47, and 59 are not subject to rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Nakatani.

With respect to the Section 103 rejection of claim 66 and its dependent claims, the Office Action contends that Nakatani "would indeed be constructed as claimed, in the absence of unexpected results." The Office Action has not pointed to anything in Nakatani suggesting that resin material can be substituted for the copper foils. In addition, the Office Action has not presented any substantial evidence supporting its conclusion that resin material can be substituted for the copper foils. Using a resin layer that is formed from the same material as the resin material impregnated into the fiber sheet allows the resin layer to be smooth. Increased smoothness "prevents short circuits between adjacent circuit-patterns formed by etching metal foil 5 selectively." (page 6, line 27-page 7, line 8). Accordingly, claim 66 and its dependent claims 69, 70, 73, and 76 are not subject to rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Nakatani.

For all of the above reasons, applicants solicit allowance of all pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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